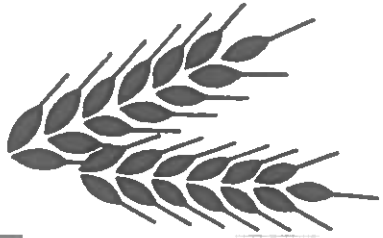


ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

# In Focus



SPECIAL EDITION

## St. Patrick's CREW on Mission 2006

"Got God?" was the theme and the challenge for the 2006 CREW (Christ Renews Everyone's World) Mission. And the St. Patrick's teens and chaperones who participated in this mission from Sunday, Jul. 9, through Friday, Jul. 16, clearly answered the challenge; they "Got God" and they shared God with the people they helped and with one another during their six-day experience.

For this trip 17 teens and 9 chaperones traveled to East St. Louis, where they worked on two houses under the auspices of the East St. Louis Action Research Project.

The CREW bus left St. Patrick's church with a blessing for the participants after the 9:00 Mass on Sunday, Jul. 9. After a three-hour drive to Our Lady of the Snows shrine in Belleville, where they stayed overnight, the teens and chaperones had dinner, participated in a Bible study, and prepared for the upcoming events.



In East St. Louis the teens were divided into two work teams. One group of teens and chaperones worked at the Sander's Development Center. This organization cares for foster children with developmental disabilities. A second group of teens and chaperones worked at Opal's House, a domestic violence shelter and intervention program for women and children.



On each of the four workdays the teens and chaperones put in 7-8 hours of hot, dusty, and very physical labor. The houses required roof repairs, painting, and substantial interior remodeling. A ceiling was repaired and painted, paneling was installed, ceiling fans hung, and a washer repaired. Shelving was built, storerooms reorganized, and a side yard cleared of trash.

At Opal's House the work team hung 300 square feet of sheet rock, patched another 300 square feet of plaster, applied over 400 lineal feet of joint tape, and spread 23 gallons of joint compound.



On Thursday, Fr. Joe Hogan joined a work team at one of the houses, where he picked up a paintbrush and promptly got to work. Later that day he led the teens and the chaperones in a communal reconciliation service. Many of the teens and chaperones indicated in their Mission evaluation comments that the communal reconciliation service was one of the highlights of the trip. After the reconciliation service everyone participated in a friendly water balloon toss—a welcome relief after the heat of the day!





Each night after the end of the workday the teens and chaperones shared a Bible study, with discussion centered on the theme of the trip, “Got God?” Topics for the Bible studies included:

- Why do we need God in our life?
- How do others see God in us?
- Help us to see God in others.
- Sin and forgiveness



On Friday the team finished off the week with a day of rest and recreation at Six Flags amusement park.

In order to participate in this CREW Mission, each teen was required to put in two hours of fundraising, 20 hours of service, and attendance at religious education classes. In total, the teens contributed 400 hours of service while also raising \$15,000 toward the expense of the Mission trip. The teens

represented the five high schools in the C-U area: Champaign Central, Champaign Centennial, Urbana, St. Thomas Moore, University High, and St. Joseph-Ogden High School.

According to comments made on the Mission evaluation sheets filled out by teen and adult participants, the Mission was a life-changing experience in many ways. Here is a sampling of their comments in response to the question “How has this mission trip changed you or the way you view others?”

“It showed me that just a week of my time can make a huge impact for others, and make the difference between hope and despair. Essie, before we came, was discouraged but is now once again hopeful in her dream of a shelter for women and children.” *Emily Floess*

“I am more grateful for what I have.” (*Name withheld on request*)

“It gave me perspective and a greater appreciation for everything I’ve been blessed with.” (*Name withheld on request*)

“More compassion.” *Micah Cottingham*

“It showed me that when I think bad things are happening, these people and many others have it worse.” *Mary Kimball*

What was the best part of the trip? The odds-on favorite was the visit to Six Flags. But others singled out for mention were “the job sites—plenty of good work projects and ... people to learn about,” “Union Station and the BBQ wing experiences,” the opportunities for “just being able to hang out and get to know people better,” “getting good work done for people who needed it—seeing them



smile,” “bringing joy to people,” “working with Essie and getting a chance to restore her hope that her dream would become a reality,” “Thursday evening with Fr. Joe,” And, finally, this: “The best part was getting to know wonderful people from St. Pat’s whom I didn’t know very well, and people like Essie and Billy in East St. Louis, who were truly trying to make a difference.”

Dwight Raab, one of the chaperones, summed up his experience this way: “I enjoyed working with a good bunch of hard-working kids... they realized that they were doing good for people.”

### ***Mission 2006***

#### adults

Dwight Raab  
Bob Kimmey  
Randy Pankau  
Jim Mayer  
Chris Freidhof  
Bonnie Kimball  
Marty Perry  
Bernie Laumann  
Mike Andrejasich

#### teens

Grant Cinker  
Robie Kimmey  
Micah Cottingham  
Mike Fitzgerald  
Anna Mayer  
Emily Floess  
Nathanial Perry  
Sam Freidhof  
Lucas Raab  
Jessica Grove  
Maciek Swiech  
Thera Hubler  
Paige Whippo  
Catherine Keane  
Theresa Laumann  
Jared Kimball  
Mary Kimball



